

Vital Education, The record of an
Experiment.

More than once The Editor of the Special Reports on Education has done me the singular honour to ask me to write a Report of our work. I have had some diffidence in complying because such a report must be to a some extent the record of personal efforts to work out an ideal of education more or less personally evolved, but apropos in the report of our inspectors

(Rev C. Parey) for the year just closed (Rev C. Parey) strikes me as offering a Key-note for useful reflection. He speaks of "the abounding vitality" of the work in the House of Education (a secondary Training College for women teachers, chiefly Gouvernresses in Families). I have thought sometimes that what Mr. Taaler characterises as the "restlessness" of the public mind at home abroad on the subject of secondary education is due to the fact that this education

cannot always be described as vital
 that young people are turned out
 from excellent schools debilitated
 as far as their minds go. Now we
~~know~~ in this Training College, know
 very well how the sharp influence
 of a "bad success" takes; we have
 many negligences, ignorances
 known over, but we think,
 we work upon a few plain
 principles whose effect is
 vitalising. If we do not
 proclaim our errors it is because
 they are not due to the ideal
 principles I am anxious to set
 forth & which I think certainly
 result in intellectual vitality.
 We do not look at the dead
 young women who have "graduated"
 or even "matriculated" or have
 passed any examination signi-
 fying some such educational
 standard. Young women are apt
 to be over the mountains, over

at any age from ~~say~~ ^{say} 15 to 40. If
 have passed or ~~to have~~ been prepared
 for the Senior Local Cambridge
 Examination say in English subjects
 2 modern languages, Latin Mathematics
 & - all the better if she have
 passed in two ^{or 3} of the subjects of
 the ^{Cambridge} Higher Local Examination.

In addition to this we rather make
 a point of some general culture
 reading, fluency in speaking
 one or two foreign languages
 some musical ability. It is
 distressing to find how few young
 people play even the piano, ^{even people} will
 not be able to do ^{is as great}
 a disservice ^{to a sovereign} as to a mother.
 With this modest equipment
 we find that young people
 come to us with receptive minds,
 open to the conviction that

Knowledge may be delightful,
 & able to take in the fact that
 training has nothing whatever

to do with cramming, but must
be accomplished by the student
herself, for herself & in herself.
At the end of two years the result
is usually gratifying.

Our work in the College is limited to
training; we do not consider that
we teach except incidentally by
way of complete training in the method
of teaching given subjects of instruction;
but in this way we cover a good
deal of ground. Modern Languages

(French German Italian)

receive much attention; the Eouri
Method is our basis of work, as
affording much training & development
of the ear in catching foreign words,
so the vocal organs in producing
them; but as this method can
be taught only by persons who
have some command of the language
we do a great deal in the way of
reading & lecturing. The students
for example go through considerable
courses of French History & French

Literature as well as Grammar &
 composition, all such lectures
 being given in French. We do not
 accomplish so much in German
 but several of the ^{works of classical authors} ~~former~~ ^{classics}
 are read with the German mistress
 we take up Italian, believing that
 the more spoken language a pupil
 attempts so much more ^{are} ~~is~~ ^{are}
 linguistic difficulties simplified.
 Our aim in the teaching of Latin
 is to turn out our Primary governesses
 able to carry little boys & girls as
 far as the reading of Caesar,
 while our Secondary governesses
 may or may not be able to
 read Vergil - Livy - Cicero, Horace
 according to where their former
 education has left them: but
 our point is that Latin like
 the modern languages should
 be learnt in a living way i.e.
 that speaking, writing & reading
 should be called into use from

the beginning.

In the teaching of Mathematics again our endeavour is that algebra should be tacked on to arithmetic that the mind should be early accustomed to work with other symbols as well as the digits. Our primary governors should be able to teach (little boys & girls) as far as the 1st Bk of Euclid at any rate

while in algebra they should be able to teach the simple rules

The secondary governors work at

The 1st 6 Books of Euclid according as their previous education has enabled them while at the same time reading such books as Chrysothemi's on algebra Prof. Clifford's Common Sense of the Exact Sciences. Heron's Compound Figures.

A good deal of time is given to Science in connection with Nature Study. Physical Geography is largely deduced from an examination of the district, which is particularly rich in examples of watersheds.

River basins sources - main - lakes & their tributaries. Geology in the same way is studied from the basis of the Geology of the district. The formation with outcrop of limestone - Evidence of glacial action & volcanic disturbances. The flora & fauna of the country are carefully studied in situ & a general knowledge of biology & botany are obtained from such

works as Prof. Thompson

& Prof. Joddes -

We owe a singularly well planned botanical garden to the kindness of the Rev. W. F. Tuckwell, an admirable botanist who constructed it for us.

The students keep it up with much spirit, the 70 beds being appropriated by the several ~~gardens~~ ^{gardens}. They go through a course of Human Physiology & Hygiene tested by the examination of the Nat. Health Society, the Education Board.

Nature work especially is done everywhere. Every one keeps a Nature Diary, in which day by day she notes or paints facts or objects that have interested her. Games are also subservient to Nature work. Every one knows when & where the redstart is first to be seen, the bog bean, the water avens, where ^{super} the curlew is to be seen & heard, where & when

pockard, mallard, heron, perhaps
 pebe are to be speed and "Bird
 walks" "Plant walks" geology
 & geography walks of small
 groups of students with an
 authority on that particular
 subject are of almost daily
 occurrence; there is always
 an object for an expedition or
 a mountain climb. Hockey
 Hockey is the game in favour with
 us as it falls due in the least
 inviting months. Handicrafts -
 Handicrafts receive much
 attention & afford a good
 deal of vigorous living.
 The course of Cardboard
 Ploids set by the Educational
 Handwork Assoc & examined by
 them we find an admirable
 basis for every sort of handicraft
 as cultivating dexterity & strength
 of hand & back & eye.
 Having gone through a rather long

laborious course of card board
 stoga other handicrafts are
 taken up with singular readiness
 rapidity - basketwork, brasswork
 leather work, rug making, bookbinding
 clay modelling wood carving &c
 Those handicrafts like wood carving ^{which}
 brass work &c depend largely on
 artistic feeling are greatly aided
 by the art training the students receive.
 A training given on free artistic lines
 the aim of which is to enable them
 to express what they see in bold
 or rapid watercolours or charcoal
 sketches. 1

The power of appreciation is even
 more carefully cultivated than that
 of execution & in this matter we
 are greatly indebted to a friend
 who has studied & secured repro-
 ductions of perhaps every picture
 cathedral, monument &c which
 Mr Ruskin ^{has} described.

Through this lady's weekly lectures
 (abundantly illustrated)

the students get some ultimate with a appreciation of Station Out. The students learn to cook in order to be able to track their pupils a good deal of attention is given to Swedish drill & calisthenic exercises (Mrs Wordsworth's).

That which links the student employment of the students gives impulse to the whole is the theory & practice of Education.

hours per week are devoted to this subject & each student is for about ~~eight~~ weeks in the Practising School, six in sole charge now of one class, now of another.

Every week two Criticism Lessons are given before the staff take note of the students.

These details of work are probably the same as in most Training Colleges but possibly the students here are a little differentiated by their clear grasp of a set of working principles which give them an easy sense of power and purpose.

We say that: 'Education is an atmosphere a Discipline, a life'. 'atmosphere' differs from 'environment' in being more pervading & less open to arbitrary manipulation.

By a 'discipline' we understand the formation of the habits of the good life & of the alert intelligence; By a 'life' we understand that the function of education is to sustain the noncorporeal life by a fit nutriment of ideas.

The attitude of the teacher is expressed for us by Dante's Humble Plant & our attitude towards subjects of instruction is figured in what we call our Educational Creed, that particular frescoed wall of the Spanish Chapel in Florence which represents the descent of the Divine Spirit, first on those in the upper chamber then below on Moses, Perseus &c, again below on Prophets & apostles and again

What is the best way to Train up Children?

Each succeeding age finds our Country dominated by a leading idea or, rather, by a pair of ~~opposed~~ ^{characters or} opposed ideas which, with much confusion of battle, work out ~~practically~~ ^{practically} the same results. Dickens' 'imperial thinking' on the ~~one~~ ^{one} hand & 'individual rights' on the other, are these moving ideas. If we range ourselves on the side of the 'imperial thinking' section, a great impetus, almost the impulse of a new career, is given to parents; ^{for it} that more worthy thing can men & women do than bring up families of service to the State! The question of the training of ^{a large family} children becomes of imperial importance. That is not a slight thing for it is well ^{recognized} for us all to feel that we are an active part of a great whole. But there is a nebulous cloud of ideas of what is the best way of bringing up children, & the question of the 'best way' is likely to provoke much discussion. As for the physical care of children, we are ^{fairly} better ^{in theory at any rate} agreed, excepting always the few who follow after fads. Children should have a plentiful, wholesome, ^{varied} simple diet, avoiding tinned meats, spices, sauces, tall highly-flavoured foods. They should wear cleanable, simple, loosely-cut, garments, ^{on outer garments} (Ruskin cloth, for example for girls), should have as much air & exercise as can be contrived.

and this is for the sake of the children & not for the sake of the parents. The wear & tear of continual discussion as to whether this or that shall be done or eradicated is fatal to any progress in character & is a most undue nervous strain upon the children. ^{My}Children, too, are born to rule, but that is provided for in that Kingdom of make-believe to which every child has an entrance. That a little autocrat should put himself before his parents is an inverted & mischievous order of things.

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But how am I to rule when Tommy won't do things? - says a worn out mother. The conviction that they can rule & ought to rule, gently, justly & tall for the children's sake, is a great support to too diffident parents who are easily convinced that their children are in advance of themselves.

To recognise a principle is, in itself, a source of strength but to have another auxiliary in the force of habit.

"Use is second nature," we say & some of us know that "habit is ten natures." But we think that habits are come by chance affairs, of which there is no occasion to take heed. Now our habits rule nineteenth of adults. We cannot ^{keep} our children ^{from} forming habits; what we can do is to choose the habits they shall form.

Habit runs on the lines of nature for the most part;

The secret of muscular habits & powers, however ~~is that~~ ^{is that} 5

The ~~fact is~~, the muscles grow to the uses they are put to, most easily, to the uses they are earliest put to. The tissues of the brain behave in the same way. They somehow shape themselves to the thoughts we most often think; thoughts of obedience, or of wilfulness, of good or of generous giving, of effort or of idleness; any normal child may be trained on the lines of habits which his parents ^{have chosen} choose for him.

'But, says a parent, "Man is naturally sulky, & from headless & selfish; Fanny tells falsehoods, Ethel will have her own way, in spite of anything & Fred is ^{abominably conceited} unconquerably careless & heedless'. These, or some of these, or some other hindrances of the like kind, are pleaded by most parents with, "What can I do? I am always telling him or her", or "I'm sure I've scolded him enough about it", or "I punish him nearly every day", or "I have tried what little rewards can do - a penny every Sunday when he has not lost his temper during the week", & "nothing seems to make any difference, I suppose we must just struggle through." Since the

Since the laws of habit have been discovered, then, naturally, does seem like a means of treatment open for one ^{or} another bad habit which, like a fly, in the ointment

spoils, ~~and another~~, an otherwise good & pleasant life; & parents who want to send ^{deprived} ~~at~~ ^{for} citizens & noble patriots must consider at the outset what to do with a little laggard, or coward, or tyrant, or rullen # Kill - joy, who spoils the nursery & the home fireside. ^{Can't} ~~Here~~ reforming good habits, especially the habit of obedience, is, no doubt, the chief general concern of parents for children are naturally persons of goodwill with honest desires towards ~~to~~ right thinking & right living. Therefore, provide a child with what he needs in the way of instruction, opportunity & wholesome ~~opportunities~~ ^{opportunities} this character will take care of itself. But one thing more we must do, ^{any} ~~namely~~ a child ^{we might say} is, as we have seen, hampered by some hindrance ~~that~~ ^{we must help to} ~~business~~ is to help him to get rid of it. Now there is a sort of popular short-cut, a universal remedy, which makes many a school room & many a nursery place of smiling goodness but of some fecklessness. All naughty tempers & wilful ways may be quelled by influence, suggestion more or less hypnotic. 'I know Tommy means to be a good boy' with a charming smile & the influence of a constraining personality, will have the desired effect. But Tommy loses force & becomes less of a person day by day, & in the end, becomes a little blasé & thoughtless.

we may only deal directly with children. we may not suggest the thought ~~they~~ ^{we} wish them to think but may tell them straight what they are to do. Bearing in mind the law of habit, however, of how a habit is formed, ~~while~~ by the repetition of the same act or thought until some sort of precedent is set up in the brain, we can avert interruptions & disasters in the world-old way used by old-fashioned nurses which is very simple & psychologically sound. The nurse stops a screaming fit by dimpling the baby's nape. The wife (mother) keeps her husband coming down on George's misbehavior by introducing some diverting topic, by means of discussion, the solemn cloud or passionate outbreak may be averted before the child knows he is displeased & 'naughty'. Feeling comes before thought & thought before act, & if a child is sent off to do some interesting thing while he is in the stage of feeling, the repeated record in the brain tissues of sulky fits, or passionate outbreaks, may be broken, the bad habit stopped & a good & genial habit of temper introduced in its place. So soon as the child is old enough to use self-control, he should be taught how to keep himself in order, not by marking himself beyond all the time but by thinking of something else until the bad fit is over.

We may ~~make~~ make the lazy child dilapidate by setting him day by day a timed task & seeing that he does it in the ~~to~~ time with play to follow. That is,

if our training in diligence is regular. 3

The untruthful child is often a parasite to his parents; his false falsehoods are gratuitous & would appear to do neither harm nor good to himself nor anyone else. We must remember that children live a good deal in a Kingdom of make-believe & what they imagine is as real to them as what takes place. Let them be fed with fairy-tales & their imaginings are quite distinct from real life. The child who tells you a lion ran after him down the street is playing in the Kingdom of make-believe & the wise mother smiles & says 'pretend', - 'pretend?' But, if he says, 'that he met Mr. Jones who gave him a penny which he gave to a beggar', it is less easy to see that he is still making believe. He must have a little training & speedily to make him accurate in reporting facts along with fairy-tales to feed his fancy.

(Bearing in mind that our care must be to form the habit of right-doing in whatever direction the child's tendency is to err we shall have pains to see that the right action is repeated, the wrong-doing averted, for a few weeks say, until the desired habit is formed. As the child is able to bear them we shall instil the principles of right-conduct, the motives for right action but meantime we must bear in mind that what we call 'failings', that is habitual transgressions of one sort, failures in truth, or kindness, or temper, have become physical failings in a sense,

That is, have made some sort of record in the brain substance that this record must be obliterated by stopping the bad habit or setting up a good one in its place.

If all the parents in England were to set themselves to train their children on some such lines as we have indicated, we should still all be liable to sudden failures, temptation, pain, but possibly the habitual Loner, Wastrel, Kill-joy, would tend to a surprising extent to disappear.